

Application No. 10/547,664
Amendment dated November 20, 2009
After Final Office Action of August 25, 2009

Docket No.: 09867/0203329-US0

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The attached sheet of drawings includes changes to Figure 17. Please substitute the attached drawings in place of the drawings submitted with the originally filed application.

Attachment: Replacement sheet presenting revised Figure 17.

REMARKS

Prior to entry of this paper, claims 1-3 and 6 were pending. Claims 1-3 and 6 were rejected. In this paper claim 6 is amended. Claims 4-5 were previously canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter therein. No claims are added. After entry of this clarifying amendment, claims 1-3 and 6 will be pending. No new matter is added by way of this amendment. For at least the following reasons, it is respectfully submitted that each of the presently pending claims is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Amendments to the Specification

The Specification is amended to correct a translation error that was inadvertently introduced in preparing an English translation of the Japanese-language specification filed in the parent PCT application (PCT/JP2005/001927). The corresponding original paragraph, i.e., paragraph [0008], appears on page 2, lines 5-8, of the PCT publication (WO 2005/075036 A1). Page 2 of the PCT publication is attached as **Exhibit A**. A Translation Certificate attesting to the accuracy of the corrected translation is attached as **Exhibit B**.

Objections to the Drawings

The drawings stand objected to under 37 C.F.R. 1.83(a) for failing to show every feature specified in the claims. Specifically, the Examiner contends that the drawings do not illustrate an ejection port located on the first side wall of the medal tray, as recited in independent claim 1. In response, Applicants respectfully direct the Examiner's attention to Fig. 18 of the present application, which illustrates a slit-shaped medal ejection port 53b that is included in the left wall 53 of the medal tray. (See Specification, Fig. 18 and paragraph [0029]).

Moreover, Applicants submit herewith a clarifying amendment to Fig. 17 to more clearly illustrate the ejection port 53b in the perspective view of the medal tray. Support for this clarifying amendment may be found in the originally filed Specification, for example, at paragraph [0029] and in Fig. 18. It is respectfully submitted that the clarifying amendment to Fig. 17 does not add any new matter.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections to the drawings is respectfully requested.

Objections to the Claims

Claim 6 stands objected to as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. Claim 6 is amended herein to be in independent form. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to claim 6 is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claim 2 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement.

The present application published as U.S. Patent Publication No. 2006/0183553 (“the Published Application”) on August 17, 2006.

The Examiner asserts that paragraphs [0008] and [0072] of the Published Application describe a medal tray having a medal ejection port provided within the rear wall of the medal tray. (See Office Action, page 4, lines 4-7). Claim 2 recites that the first side wall of the medal tray has a medal ejection port. Thus, the Examiner contends that claim 2 contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention.

In response, Applicants respectfully direct the Examiner’s attention to paragraph [0029] and Fig. 18 of the originally filed Specification (“the Specification”). Paragraph [0029] of the Specification corresponds to paragraph [0072] of the Published Application. Paragraph [0029] states: “**In the left wall 53,** a slit-shaped medal ejection port 53b which is long in the vertical direction for ejecting the medals M to the medal tray 50 is provided nearer to the rear wall 55 side than the front wall 52.” Fig. 18 illustrates the medal ejection port 53b included in the left wall 53. Thus, there is clearly support in the Specification for a medal tray having a first side wall, i.e., the left wall, that has a medal ejection port.

Further, the present application is a U.S. National Phase application under 35 U.S.C. §371 of International Patent Application No. PCT/JP2005/001927, filed February 9, 2005. The phrase “a medal ejection port may be provided in the **rear** wall,” as recited in paragraph [0008] of the Specification was improperly translated when the English translation of the Japanese-language specification filed in the parent PCT application (PCT/JP2005/001927) was prepared. The above-identified phrase should instead read, “a medal ejection port may be provided in the **side** wall.” Applicants have made an appropriate amendment to the Specification herein to address this translation error. As noted above, a Translation Certificate attesting to the accuracy of the corrected translation is attached as Exhibit B.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese Patent No. JP 2003-24512 to Keiji (“Keiji”).

Keiji describes a gaming device that includes a medal saucer 23B for holding medals. The medal saucer 23B includes a separation acceleration part 25c that keeps medals from standing up and sticking to the back wall of the medal saucer 23B. (See Keiji, Fig. 6 and paragraphs [0005] and [0027]).

Independent claim 1 of the present application recites a medal tray including a rear wall that is provided with a protrusion portion for regulating accumulation of medals along the rear wall. The “protrusion portion is tapered in the vertical direction from a base portion joined to the rear wall toward a tip, and disposed between a medal ejection port and the bottom wall so that medals ejected from the medal ejection port fall on a tapered portion of the protrusion portion.” Thus, in the medal tray as recited in claim 1, medals ejected from the medal ejection port fall on a tapering portion of the protrusion portion and are led away from the rear wall to regulate accumulation of medals along the rear wall. (See Specification, paragraph [0030]).

It is respectfully submitted that Keiji does not appear to teach or suggest the above-recited features of independent claim 1. In contrast, Keiji describes a separation acceleration part 25c in the shape of a semicircle formed along the length of the back wall of a medal saucer 23B. (See Keiji, Fig. 6 and paragraphs [0005] and [0027]). The cited sections of Keiji do not teach or suggest that the separation promoting portion 25c is disposed between a medal ejection port and the bottom wall “so that medals ejected from the medal ejection port fall on a tapered portion of the protrusion portion,” as recited in claim 1. Instead, Keiji describes that the separation acceleration part 25c prevents medals that are pressed against the back wall of the medal saucer 23B from adhering to the back wall. (See Keiji, paragraph [0027]).

It is respectfully submitted that, because Keiji fails to disclose at least the above-recited features of claim 1, it cannot anticipate or make obvious claim 1.

Independent claim 6, as amended, is directed to a medal game machine that includes a medal tray having each of the features discussed above with respect to independent claim 1. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Keiji cannot anticipate or make obvious amended claim 6 for at least the same reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claim 1 and amended claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Keiji is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 2 and 3 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Keiji in view of the Examiner’s statement of ordinary skill in the art.

Claims 2 and 3 are dependent on independent claim 1, while reciting additional limitations. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that Keiji cannot render claims 2 and 3 obvious for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to independent claim 1.

With specific regard to dependent claim 2, that claim recites that the “first side wall has the medal ejection port.” The Examiner asserts that Applicants have stated within the Specification that the medal ejection port can be located in the rear wall and that it would have been obvious as to one

skilled in the art as a matter of design choice to change the location of the medal ejection port of Keiji from the rear wall to the side wall. (See Office Action, page 5, line 17-page 6, line 8).

It is respectfully submitted that Applicants have not stated within the Specification that the medal ejection port 53b can be located in the rear wall 55 of the medal tray 50. As noted above, the phrase “a medal ejection port may be provided in the **rear wall**,” as recited in paragraph [0008] of the Specification was the result of an improper translation of the Japanese-language specification filed in the parent PCT application (PCT/JP2005/001927). The above-identified phrase should instead read, “a medal ejection port may be provided in the **side wall**.” Additionally, as discussed above, paragraph [0029] of the Specification states that the medal ejection port 53b is provided in the left wall 53. The reference to the rear wall 55 with respect to the medal ejection port 53b in paragraph [0029] of the Specification describes that the medal ejection port 53b is located nearer to the rear wall 55 than the front wall 52.

The location of the medal ejection port is not a simple matter of design choice. By providing the medal ejection port in the side wall 53, the position of the protrusion portion 57 may be set just below the medal ejection port 53b. (See Specification, paragraph [0029]). Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that it would not have been obvious as to one skilled in the art as a matter of design choice to change the location of the medal ejection port of Keiji from the rear wall to the side wall.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claims 2 and 3 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) in view of Keiji is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

It is respectfully submitted that each of the presently pending claims (claims 1-3 and 6) are now in condition for allowance and notification to that effect is requested. Examiner is invited to contact the Applicants' representative at the below-listed telephone number if it is believed that the prosecution of this application may be assisted thereby. Although only certain arguments regarding patentability are set forth herein, there may be other arguments and reasons why the claimed invention is patentable. Applicants reserve the right to raise these arguments in the future.

It is believed that all appropriate fees are included with these submissions. Should the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office determine that additional fees are owed or that any refund is owed for this application, the Commissioner is hereby authorized and requested to charge the required fee(s) and/or credit the refund(s) owed to our Deposit Account No. 04-0100.

Dated: November 20, 2009

Respectfully submitted,

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Appendix:

Attachment: Replacement sheet presenting revised Figure 17
Exhibit A
Exhibit B

Exhibit A

に溜まるようになる。従って、後壁に沿ってメダルが無制限に積み重ねられるおそれがなくなり、メダルが積み重なって形成される山の頂上が前方に偏るようになる。これにより、後壁側にメダルの払出スペースを確保してメダルの詰まりを防止し、プレイヤーによる修正なしで底壁上により多くのメダルを積み重ねることが可能となる。

[0008] 本発明のメダル受け皿において、前記側壁にはメダル払出口が設けられ、前記突出部は前記メダル払出口と前記底壁との間に配置されてもよい。この場合にはメダル払出口と底壁との間に突出部が介在するので、メダル払出口が底壁上のメダルによって塞がれにくくなる。

[0009] さらに、前記底壁と前記突出部との間には湾曲壁が配置されてもよい。このような湾曲壁を設けた場合にはメダルが底壁と突出部との間に挟み込まれるおそれもなくなる。また、前記突出部は前記後壁と接合される基部から先端に向かうほど上下方向に狭くなるテーパ状に形成されてもよい。このようなテーパ形状とすれば、突出部を設けたことによるメダル受け皿の容積の減少を抑えつつ突出部の効果を十分に発揮させることができる。前記突出部は、前記後壁の幅方向全長に亘って設けられてもよい。幅方向全長に設けることにより突出部の効果を最大限に発揮させることができる。なお、本発明は上記のメダル受け皿を備えたメダルゲーム機として具現化されてもよい。

発明の効果

[0010] 以上に説明したように、本発明によれば、後壁に沿ってメダルが無制限に積み重ねられるおそれがなくなり、メダルが積み重なって形成される山の頂上が前方に偏るようになるため、後壁側にメダルの払出スペースを確保してメダルの詰まりを防止し、プレイヤーによる修正なしで底壁上により多くのメダルを積み重ねることができる。

図面の簡単な説明

[0011] [図1]本発明の一形態に係るゲーム機の正面図。
[図2]同ゲーム機の平面図。
[図3]同ゲーム機の右側面図。
[図4]メインユニットの正面図。
[図5]メインユニットの正面側の斜視図。

Exhibit B

Translation Certification

Document Translated: Paragraph [0008] appearing on page 2, lines 5-8, of WO 2005/075036 A1 (publication of PCT/JP2005/001927).

This is to certify that the English paragraph presented below represents an accurate and faithful rendition of the above-stated Japanese-language paragraph to the best of my knowledge and belief.

In the medal tray of the invention, a medal ejection port may be provided in the side wall, and the protrusion portion may be disposed between the medal ejection port and the bottom wall. In this case, since the protrusion portion is interposed between the medal ejection port and the bottom wall, closing of the medal ejection port with medals on the bottom wall is suppressed.

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